

BV

113

.56

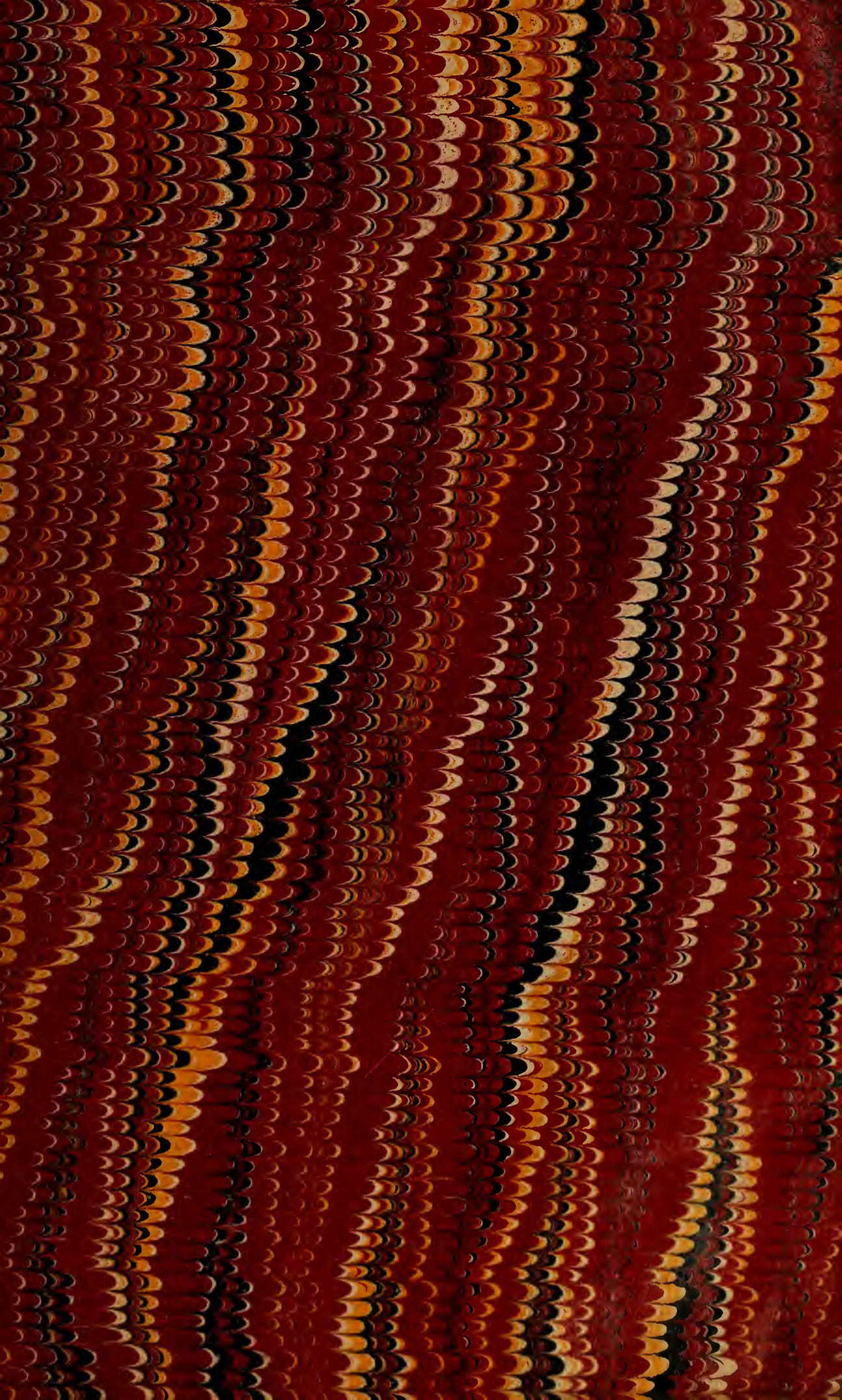
LIBRARY OF CONGRESS.

FORCE COLLECTION.]

Chap. BV113

Shelf .56

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.



THE SABBATH.

A

SERMON

DELIVERED IN

THE CITY OF WASHINGTON,

BEFORE THE

PRESBYTERY OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA,

BY JOHN C. SMITH,

Pastor of Bridge Street Church, Georgetown.

Library of Congress
1837
City of Washington

PUBLISHED BY ORDER OF PRESBYTERY.

17
J
WASHINGTON:

PRINTED BY JACOB GIDEON, JR.

1835.

BV113
.56

TO THE MEMBERS OF THE PRESBYTERY OF THE DISTRICT OF
COLUMBIA.

MY DEAR BRETHREN:

Agreeably to the resolution adopted at our late stated meeting, I furnish a copy of my Sermon on "THE SABBATH," delivered before Presbytery on the 6th instant.

I have never in my life sought the honors of authorship, and would have shrunk from appearing in the character of an author now, had it not been for the reasons stated when the resolution was offered; believing with the respected and beloved brother who submitted it, that "something on this subject is needed amongst us," I consented to the publication of the Sermon; how far this will serve to throw light on this interesting and important subject each one will judge for himself.

With sentiments of fraternal regard,

I am dear brethren,

Your fellow servant in Christ,

JOHN C. SMITH.

Georgetown, D. C. Oct. 10th, 1835.

THE SABBATH.

GENESIS II. 1, 2, 3 verses.—“Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them; and on the seventh day, God ended his work which he had made; and He rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made; and God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made.”

IN entering upon the consideration of the subject assigned me by my brethren of the Presbytery, I call your attention to the verses just read, as the *first* of the scripture authorities for the observance of one day in seven as a rest holy unto God. This day was blessed, was sanctified as a memorial of his finished work; it was *set apart* from the other days, because that in it he had rested from all his work.

There are two very common and very popular objections to the Sabbath, which, because of their popularity, become highly dangerous to the best interests of man. I shall therefore take up these objections, and examine them in the light of scripture and reason. I do it the more readily, because they proceed not merely from the scoffer and the infidel, but from many who profess to love our Lord Jesus Christ and revere the institutions of the Bible; difficulties exist in many minds, while, perhaps, very few of us enjoy that clear light which God hath shed upon the subject.

Your attention is called, not to a mere abstract truth—not to a discussion of some point in theology on which men differ, and on which they have a right to differ, but to a discussion of practical truth, of duty, in which the interests of souls are involved: this is a subject of VITAL importance to the church and to the world; shake the foundation on which the Sabbath rests, and you shake one of the pillars of God's throne; establish this, and you have a point from which is radiated the light of Heaven. But to the objections: Men say that the Sabbath day is not now to be observed, because it was a mere JEWISH institution; that when the ceremonial law was abrogated, this being a part of that law, was abrogated with it; this is very specious, exceedingly plausible, but as untrue and profane as it is specious or plausible, and it were sufficient, with every candid mind, that we meet this objection with the passage of scripture under consideration. Where were the Jewish statutes when, “on

the seventh day, God ended his work which he had made," and when he blessed and sanctified this day? The *FIRST* Sabbath was the *seventh* day of time; God has closely connected it with the creation days; He, himself, then instituted it, and blessed and sanctified it. The Sabbath, a mere Jewish statute!—when were these statutes enacted? Go consult any chronological table, and learn from that table, that more than 2500 years from the creation had elapsed ere Moses received his commission at the burning bush;—and was there no day of rest for man or beast,—no Sabbath for the soul till on Mount Sinai God said "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy?"—how can man dare thus to speak? But we are not left to conjecture on this subject, nor do we appeal to *the benevolence* of God to sustain our views. We meet the objection face to face, and oppose the statements of man with the truth of God. The objection, when analysed, means that there was no Sabbath till the Mosaic code was enacted.

The following scriptures shew how false such assertions are: Refer to the 4th chap. of Genesis, 3d verse,—“and in process of time, (see the marginal translation in your family bibles, “and at the end of days,”) it came to pass that Cain brought, of the fruit of the ground, an offering unto the Lord.” 8th chap. of Genesis, 8 to 12 verses:—When Noah sends forth the dove, which, finding no rest, returned to him; “and he stayed yet other *SEVEN* days, and again he sent forth the dove out of the ark, and the dove came in to him in the evening,—and lo! in her mouth was an olive leaf plucked off. So Noah knew that the waters were abated from off the earth, and he stayed yet other *seven* days, and sent forth the dove, which returned not again unto him any more.” The object of these references is to show that, as early as these periods, they computed time by *seven days*.

Again,—In the 16th chap. of the Book of Exodus, while the Hebrews were in the wilderness, and before they had been assembled around Mount Sinai, the Sabbath was observed, “And it came to pass, that on the sixth day they gathered twice as much bread, two omers for one man, and all the rulers of the congregation came and told Moses; and he said unto them, this is that which the Lord hath said: to-morrow is the rest of the holy Sabbath unto the Lord; bake that which ye will bake to-day, and seethe that ye will seethe, and that which remaineth over, lay up for you to be kept until the morning; and they laid it up till the morning as Moses bade, and it did not stink, neither was there any worm therein; and

Moses said, eat that to-day, for to-day is a Sabbath unto the Lord; to-day ye shall not find it in the field; six days ye shall gather it; but on the seventh day, which is the Sabbath, in it there shall be none; and it came to pass that there went out some of the people on the seventh day for to gather, and they found none. And the Lord said unto Moses, how long refuse ye to keep my commandments and my laws? See, for that the Lord hath given you the Sabbath, therefore he giveth you, on the sixth day, the bread of two days; abide ye, every man, in his place,—let no man go out of his place on the seventh day; so the people rested on the seventh day.”

Let us refer to the statutes themselves, and see if the decalogue was delivered in the form in which the people were accustomed to receive their laws;—was there nothing remarkable, nothing extraordinary in the delivery of these ten commandments? In all laws relating to the Hebrews as a people, the expression is, “the Lord said unto Moses;” but when the law of the Sabbath was proclaimed, “there were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the Mount, and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud, so that all the people that was in the camp trembled, and Mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the Lord descended upon it in fire, and the smoke thereof descended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole Mount quaked greatly; and when the voice of the trumpet sounded long, and waxed louder and louder, Moses spake, and God answered him by *a voice*, and GOD SPAKE ALL THESE WORDS.” How different from mere Jewish statutes! The Sabbath is God’s law;—God’s law for *all men*.

For the purpose of meeting and refuting the arguments on this subject, I will admit, for the time being, that the Sabbath was not known until the law was promulged on Mount Sinai. I ask, does the abrogation of the law of the Sabbath necessarily follow, because the observance of it was then, for the *first time*, required? Nothing is gained by objectors in reiterating their assertion, that the Sabbath is a mere Jewish statute. The question is,—is this day of perpetual obligation? The answer depends not upon *the time of enactment*, but upon a subsequent repeal or counter enactment: this repeal I demand from those who maintain that the Sabbath is not of perpetual, universal obligation; it is not found in the Bible. *This is not all*. I ask,—whence is human legislation? On what do men base their code of morals?—Is it not on these ten commandments? Why do men punish the murderer—the thief? Because God hath said, “thou shalt not kill”—“thou shalt not steal.” Is not the

command—"remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy," one of the ten? Are the sixth and the eighth now laws of God, and the *fourth* not? Who does not see the folly of attempting to set aside this blessed institution by such wretched sophistry, such miserable subterfuge! Beware, O man! lest you touch the apple of God's eye!

The second objection is in the change of the day from the SEVENTH to the FIRST. Those who make this objection, have attempted to dress it in the form of an argument. *THUS*: God requires us to keep the seventh day; the first is kept under the gospel: therefore, there is no obligation to keep any day.—Wonderful! A few years since, a committee in Congress sent forth a report on this subject, which was spread far and wide. Over this report there was much joy,—no doubt others, beside wicked men, rejoiced. Oh! my country—my country!—but I forbear.

This change of the day has perplexed many; some of whom are amongst those who love and obey the truth: for their sake, for the sake of the truth, and as an admonition to all who "hold the truth in unrighteousness," I will notice this objection. At present I shall consider it as an objection; the reasons for the change I will furnish in another part of the discourse.

Those who make this objection, assume the position that we, in numbering our days, follow the precise order in which the world was created; that God did begin to give form to the Chaotic mass, on what we call, and profanely call, Sunday; that this was the first day, and that, therefore, no day can be observed as the Sabbath but our Saturday. This no man can prove; no man can prove that the day on which the manna fell not, or that the day which the Hebrews kept, was the *very* day, and in the same order as that on which God rested from his work; and until that can be proved, the whole is assumption, and nothing more.

Again,—We are told, in the spirit of this objection, that it is impossible to observe the same appointed day every where; for, of two vessels circumnavigating the globe, one will lose, and the other will gain, a day, and that therefore the day could not have been appointed as a law for the family of man. How imposing! Sinful man hath indeed sought out many inventions; nor is the wretched art of evading the obligation of God's law among the least of his qualifications. The objection itself I meet with a few words: The command is, that a seventh portion of our time shall be set apart as a season of rest, but the *precise* period, from which time is reckoned, is not named, had no change been contemplated, perhaps the case

would have been different; the obligations of men in this, however, do not arise out of, nor do they depend on any particular day, as the seventh or first; nor are they released from these, because, in a change of places, they may gain or lose a day. If the observance of the Sabbath depended upon these, then the mistakes of men, the corrections necessary in our computation of time, would soon destroy this blessed institution. Old style and new style would be potent arguments indeed! More might be said in answer to these objections, but as they will be kept in view throughout the discourse, I shall, for the present, leave them.

From what has been already said, it is evident that the Sabbath is a day in the calendar of God, and therefore, that man can no more blot it out than he can dethrone the Most High himself. Both would be gladly done; this poor, puny thing, called "man," has already made mighty efforts to expunge the one and destroy the other. "He that sits in Heaven shall laugh; the Lord will hold them in derision."

The history of the creation is, that "in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested on the seventh day." Now, why should God, the Omnipotent Creator, employ six days in the creation of a world, when he could have done it in a moment,—with one word; yea, without a word. Why could not that voice, which said, "let there be light, and there was light," have spoken the world into being? and then, why should he rest on the seventh day? Was he weary with his labors? Did he become fatigued as man becometh fatigued? To make this assertion, is to make him like ourselves. "Hast thou not known; hast thou not heard, that the Everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the Earth, fainteth not, neither is weary?" But the question recurs, why should he rest? Fatigued he could not have been, then, why should he rest? He had finished his work, and therefore, he ceased to create: but this does not explain the observance of this seventh day. Our answer is: this world was made for man; adapted to his use; he was made lord of this creation; all that Jehovah did "was good," and designed to promote the happiness of this his noblest creature. Hence this rest of the seventh day. In this day we have "the memorial" of the finished work of God, and a rest for man. That this was the object of this institution is plain, from scripture and reason, and if we have not greatly mistaken the subject, we shall find in man now a necessity for this rest. Now if this can be shown, then have we established an important truth, and thus

exhibit the wisdom, the benevolence of God. Does the BODY of man require rest? Let the night answer,—for whom does she let fall her curtains? For the wearied,—and wherefore? That man may enjoy repose; that she may refresh and invigorate and fit him for the duties of the succeeding day; but night of herself, is not enough, man encroaches upon this period, and by artificial means, cheats her and himself of this wise, this gracious provision; or even were there no encroachment here, man needs something more than the hours of night; and therefore, to meet his necessities, God throws in the *seventh* portion of his time as A DAY of rest. Touching this subject, I offer the testimony of Dr. Farre, as given in an examination before a committee of the British House of Commons, published in this country about two years since. He had been in the practice of medicine between 30 and 40 years. What I here present is only an *extract*: “As a day of rest, I view it as a day of compensation for the inadequate restorative power of the body, under continued labor and excitement. A physician always has respect to the preservation of the restorative power, because if once this be lost, his healing office is at an end. If I shew you, from the physiological view of the question, that there are provisions in the laws of nature, you will see from the analogy, that the Sabbath was made for man as a *necessary* appointment. A physician is anxious to preserve the balance of circulation as necessary to the restorative power of the body. The ordinary exertion of man runs down the circulation every day of his life; and the first general law of nature, by which God, who is not only the giver, but also the preserver and sustainer of life, prevents man from destroying himself, is the alternating of day with night, that repose may succeed action. But although the night apparently equalizes the circulation well, yet it does not sufficiently restore its balance for the attainment of a long life; hence, one day in seven, by the bounty of Providence, is thrown in as a day of compensation, to perfect by its repose the animal system. You may easily determine this question as a matter of fact, by trying it on beasts of burden. I consider, therefore, that, in the bountiful provision of Providence, for the preservation of human life, the Sabbatical appointment is to be viewed and numbered among the natural duties, if the preservation of life be admitted to be a duty, and the premature destruction of it a suicidal act.”

I adduce this testimony, because it is the most convenient at the present moment. More might be offered equally strong and per-

herent from other sources, but our limits will not permit, pleasant and profitable as it would be, to pursue *this view* of the subject further; we must pause. Sufficient, however, I trust, has been said to convince all, that a seventh has been appointed as a day of rest, and that the necessity to observe it now, is the same as it ever was.

Thus far we have viewed the Sabbath as designed merely to meet the *physical* necessities of man,—the remarks apply with equal force to the brute creation; if our remarks be true, then the same necessity for a day of rest, that is found in man, will be found also in them;—doth God take care for oxen?—and hath he, indeed, made provision for the beasts of the field? What saith the commandment? “Thou shalt not work; thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, nor thy man servant, nor thy maid servant, *nor thy cattle;*”—but I refrain, and return to *the day*.

Having shown the necessity for this rest,—that its institution is of God and not of man,—let us now inquire as to “the day” when it is to be kept. The Jews kept *the seventh* day, “because that in it God had rested from all his work,” and because that was the greatest event then before the mind of man, and, as such, should be celebrated by all on “the footstool.” But if something more glorious than the creation of the world have taken place, and that on another day than *the seventh*, we are not to be surprized if we find *a change* in the day, from the seventh to *that day*. That such an event has transpired, beloved friends and brethren, I need scarcely say to you, who are conversant with your bibles:—

“’Twas great to make a world from nought;

“’Twas greater to redeem.”

A change in the day has taken place from the *seventh* to the *first* day of the week. I would here take occasion to remark, that a change does not necessarily affect the nature and objects of the day: for, as I have before observed, the day is only the time appointed in which men are to celebrate the events that have transpired. Our authority for this change is often demanded with an air of vast importance and bold defiance: this I shall furnish in due time. I acknowledge that I cannot lay my finger upon the passage,—the command, “remember the FIRST day to keep it holy,” and I challenge the world to produce the command, “remember the SEVENTH day to keep it holy;” the fourth commandment is, “remember the SABBATH day to keep it holy;” and this is the legislation of God for all men, in all ages, in all countries. But we are told there is no command under the gospel dispensation, that we should keep

holy this day: To this I reply, that it was altogether unnecessary; the command once issued were enough,—no new commandment was required,—the Lord Jesus Christ came not to destroy, but to confirm, fulfil, establish the law.

For the change of the day, we will furnish a part of our authority—and for this we will go directly to the Bible, “to the law and to the testimony, if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no truth in them.” This change was a subject of thought and prophecy in the times of David, we hear the royal singer in the 118th Psalm “I will praise thee, for thou hast heard me and art become my salvation. The stone which the builders refused is become the headstone of the corner, this is the Lord’s doing; it is marvellous in our eyes, this is *the day* which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it.” The stone here spoken of is the Lord Jesus Christ; the appellation is *six times* given him in the scriptures. He was rejected of the builders when he was put to death; he was made the head of the corner when he rose triumphant from the dead; how close is the connexion between his resurrection and “the day of the Lord,” none can for a moment look at the passage and not feel that even then the Psalmist saw “*the day*” and was glad. Jesus rose on the FIRST day of the week; was this accident as some would call accident? away with such a thought. What are accidents? the term should not be found in the Christian’s vocabulary. Did not Christ several times declare that he would be crucified and rise again on the *third* day, and did he not rise again “according to the scriptures.” How glorious was this day! twice had the sun gone down and all was still and silent at the sepulchre; the guards stationed to prevent the disciples from stealing the body were at their posts, nothing but the measured tread of the Roman soldier broke in upon the solemn silence, “all’s well” had scarcely been uttered when behold! there was a great earthquake: for the Angel of the Lord descended from Heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and set upon it.” Let the potshards of the earth dash against the potshards of the earth, but woe unto him that striveth with his maker!—the guards hastened from a spot so awful, so sacred, they were filled with fear. But why should we speak of them? we leave them to tell their story, and look upon the place “where the Lord lay”—he is not there, he is risen from the dead and become the first fruits of them that slept.

From the connexion in which the Psalmist has placed the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and “the day,” we would be led to con-

clude that some special notice, some particular attention would be bestowed on that day; let us examine and see if our conclusion be correct. The glorious tidings were published on *the first day*. The appearances of the risen Saviour to his friends were on this day, *first*, at the sepulchre—*second*, as these pious women hastened to spread abroad the joyful intelligence, “Jesus met them saying all hail!”—*third*, to the two disciples on their way to Emmaus;—*fourth*, “the same day at evening, when the disciples were assembled came Jesus and stood in the midst of them.” “And after eight days, again, his disciples were within and Thomas with them, then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst of them and said, peace be unto you.” It is remarkable that they, after eight days should assemble and that then, Jesus should appear again unto them, I repeat the question, was all this accident? this *first* of “the first days” was signally honored by our Lord and Master and shall not we honor that day, the most glorious in time? What associations does not this day bring home to the Christian! We will rejoice and be glad in it.

Again,—This day was honored by the descent of the Holy Spirit, “when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place, and suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting, and there appeared unto them cloven tongues, like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them, and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost.”

Again,—In the Acts of the Apostles, 20 chap. 6, 7 verses, we have this record, “and we sailed away from Phillippi, after the days of unleavened bread, and came unto them to Troas in five days, where we abode seven days. And upon the *first* day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow.” In his first epistle to the Corinthians, he directs that, on the *first* day of the week, every one should lay by in store as God had prospered him, that there should be no gatherings when he came. These passages prove, that the change of the day, from the seventh to the first, was a settled matter with the apostles; but the Jews, who were very much attached to the “old paths,” as was very natural and very proper, were slow to make the change, and it is probable that, for a time, both days were observed,—but that they should not be left in the dark on this point, Paul, in his epistle to the Hebrews, takes up the subject, and shows, from the scriptures, that this change was according to

the oracles which had been committed unto them. His argument is found in the 4th chapter:—"For he spake in a certain place of the seventh day on this wise, and God did rest the seventh day from all his works, and in this place again, if they shall enter into my rest; seeing, therefore, it remaineth that some must enter therein, and they to whom it was first preached, entered not in because of unbelief; again, he limiteth a certain day, saying, in David, (95 Psalm,) To-day, after so long a time, as it is said, to-day if ye will hear my voice, harden not your hearts; for, if Jesus (Joshua) had given them rest, then would he not have spoken of another day; there remaineth therefore, a rest (*sabbatismos*) to the people of God: for he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works as God did from his." I need not add a word to the Apostle's argument for this "keeping of a Sabbath" under the gospel; the whole is complete in itself; but if any person desire to see more, they will find the subjects of this chapter discussed at length, in an exposition of the epistle to the Hebrews, by the learned John Owen, D. D.

Thus we see that the Sabbath is an institution of God, of perpetual obligation; that the *seventh* day was observed as a memorial of the finished work of creation; that the change from the seventh to the first was, because "a greater work" had been accomplished than creation; and that this is to be observed in every age, in every clime, even until the end come. Let us now inquire what are the duties of this day; the value which Jehovah places upon it; and what influence this holy day exerts upon mankind, when properly observed?—and what are the consequences when violated? Hear what the Lord saith by his Prophet Isaiah, 58 ch. 13, 14:—"If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day, and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honorable, and shalt honor him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words, then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord, and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it."

The word "*Sabbath*" is a Hebrew word, and means "*rest*." God calls it "the Sabbath." Men miscall, nickname it "*Sunday*:" this was "the day" in which the sun was anciently worshipped. "Shall we, whose souls are lighted," employ such an epithet, and speak as if we were worshippers of the sun, and not of the true and living God? The Sabbath is a day of rest; in it "thou shalt not do any work; thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, nor thy man ser-

vant, nor thy maid servant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates." The duties of this day cannot be performed unless we rest; but it is not enough that we, ourselves, rest from our ordinary avocations, but we are equally bound to see that all over whom we have control, also rest. Shall our *servants* be made to work on this holy day? Shall not the day be observed by a cessation from all domestic employments? Alas! brethren, that our servants are treated as if they had no souls, and sometimes, as if fatigue was not a consequent upon labor. How often are two servants and two horses employed, with the carriage, to draw, in splendor, one person to the house of God, to remain at the door while this "humble worshipper" bows before the Most High? How many servants are engaged in preparing food as on other days? To them no Sabbath comes, to bless them with a release from their toil; but often, very often, their labor is increased. My brethren; these things ought not so to be. Not only servants, but others are required to violate this day of rest. How many of our newspapers are printed on the Sabbath, in which those employed, habitually break this command of God!—and not only there, but in "high places," labor is required, and required too, in the face of all that God hath said. I repeat the remark, that the duties of this day cannot be performed unless *men rest*; those who oblige others to work, must answer to God, while those who obey man rather than God, must reap the fruit of their doings. Let no one say, "spare thy servant in this little thing, that I spend one or two hours of the Sabbath in my secular business, attending to necessary work." What, if you die while engaged in this work of a few minutes, you die of unrepented sin;—and where will be your soul! But that we may see this subject in the light of scripture, turn to the 15th chapter of the Book of Numbers: "while the children of Israel were in the wilderness, they found a man that gathered sticks upon the Sabbath day:" this was what many would call "a little thing." But how did God deal with that Sabbath breaker, small as was his sin in our eyes? "The Lord said unto Moses, the man shall surely be put to death; all the congregation shall stone him with stones without the camp; and all the congregation brought him without the camp, and stoned him with stones, and he died." With this admonition before us, who will require others to work on this day of rest?—who will incur the displeasure, the punishment of God! We may here be asked, is NO WORK to be done on the Sabbath? Not as such—not as a business; "it is lawful to do well on the Sabbath day," to

relieve present distress or necessity; “if a sheep fall into a pit on the Sabbath, it is lawful to pull him out;” if a man’s life be in danger, “it is lawful” to save it; if his house be in flames, “it is lawful” to bring water and put out the fire. I need not enlarge,—the principle is plain.

Being released from the labor, the toils of the six days, we then have an opportunity of engaging in the duties of the Sabbath:—this is a day for spiritual exercises—the soul’s day, in which we are to read, to meditate, to pray, to praise; “the day which the Lord hath made,” is to be spent in doing good and getting good—a day to preach the gospel—a day to hear the gospel preached—a day to remember the finished work of Christ, and to exercise the liveliest gratitude to Him who died for our sins, and rose again for our justification—a day to forget earth and rise to heaven;—how precious, on this day, is the Bible, the Sabbath school, the Sanctuary, the preached word! Our hearts may even burn within us as we talk with Jesus. Beloved friends, thank God for the Sabbath. How sweet, how precious this day that bringeth salvation to man! I would love here to dwell, or pass from this part of the subject to that assembly above, “where congregations ne’er break up and Sabbaths never end,” but duty requires me to notice some of the ways in which this day is profaned. This sin has filled the earth,—come see the desolations which it hath wrought.

This day is trampled under foot,—is profaned by steamboats running to and fro; those employed sinning and making others to sin. Our public coaches, our mails, stop not when the day of rest appeareth; our rail-road cars whirl along with the same fearful velocity on this day as on others; our livery stables are attended, and “horses to hire,” become the occasion of sin to many of our beloved young men. God sometimes, indeed, arises, as it were for a moment, and makes an awful example of some; the soul, unwashed by atoning blood, is hurried away to the judgment—the survivors are appalled;—look, for a moment, but straightway forget what manner of persons they are. Our post offices are opened, and scores may be seen around them waiting, until the mails are assorted, that each may receive his own;—what shall the end of these things be! How many of our merchants spend a part of every Sabbath in their counting rooms?—how many despatch their vessels on this day of God?—what a multitude of men leave their native shores on this day, to return no more! Poor sailor! how my heart bleeds for thee!—far from home and kindred dear, amid the howling storm and the fury

of the elements, he perishes,—no Angel voice to speak “peace;” no kind hand to tender salvation; he is swept away,—the wave his only winding sheet, the abyss of waters his grave! Our physicians, too, may profane this day; and if there be any here this evening, I would respectfully present this subject to them: to attend the sick is the duty of all, the profession of a physician; but is it proper to attend to this, *as a business*, on this holy day? I submit the question without comment. The mechanic profanes this day by encroaching upon its first hours, or by sending home his work, though it be at an early hour: “thou shalt not do *any* work;”—but where shall I stop? I have named only a few of the many who are in this condemnation; all who employ the hours, or any portion of the Sabbath, in attending to ordinary business, seeking their own pleasure and amusement; who walk for past time or recreation, whatever may be the *ostensible* object, are guilty of this sin in the sight of God. “Lord cleanse thou us from secret faults.” The only safe rule is that furnished by the Apostle, “whether therefore ye eat or drink, or whatever ye do, do all to the glory of God.”

Let us now in conclusion, look at the influence which this institution of God exerts upon mankind. Regarded merely as a day for the rest of the body, the Sabbath is one of the greatest blessings that God has given—were it not for this day, what season of repose would the laborer enjoy, his toils would press him down to the earth, the remuneration for his services would not be enhanced, he would soon wear out. What habits of cleanliness and comfort does not this day secure—to this day how much of the refinement of life do we not owe? Were no day of rest to arrive, mankind would everywhere soon degenerate into barbarism, were this day stricken out, every comfort of civilized life would soon depart.


To see more clearly the influence of the Sabbath look at the countries or any section of the country where it is observed and compare the condition of the people with those who observe not this day of sacred rest. What did France become when she abolished this law of God? Look at Scotland and then at Spain, and at Portugal—or to come to our own beloved land, look at the people of New England and compare them with those of Louisiana, Mississippi—amongst the one the Sabbath is loved, revered, honored, obeyed; with the other, though there be many valuable people there, and many exceptions to the remark yet the Sabbath is not counted holy unto the Lord—and what the consequence is I need not say. Why in our army, our navy does vice prevail? Why are soldiers, sailors, “the

bulwark of the country," generally wicked, dissolute men? because they have no Sabbath: it is a day of inspection, of parade, of labor and not a day of rest. Let them, let all keep holy the Sabbath and soon throughout these United States, throughout the world would vice and iniquity be checked, and the glory of God cover the earth.

Protracted as have been these remarks, I feel that the subject has been but begun,—I have given but little more than *some* of the great principles of the Sabbath; to say all that could be said, and well said, were to extend the subject far beyond the limits of one discourse; I have endeavoured to bring together some of the most important points in this blessed institution; and having done this, must leave the discussion. Brethren! would we labour to make known the glad tidings of great joy, "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy." Would we exert an influence at home and abroad, let us sanctify this day, let us show by our obedience how much we love God and his Sabbath.

Brethren, God has highly distinguished us—we live in the land of Sabbaths, of bibles, of civil and religious privileges; "where much is given much will also be required." How solemn to look back upon past Sabbaths and then forward to the coming judgment; how important the question, have we improved these Sabbaths? What report have they borne to heaven; every seven years God affords a whole year of Sabbaths; "how old art thou?" Some of us may have enjoyed years of Sabbaths; have they been filled up in doing good, in getting good; have they made us "more fit and meet for the masters use?" In the enjoyment of these do we grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ?—Soon our days shall be numbered, we must go the way of all the earth, time with us shall be no more; may we all so live that death to us shall be the gate of endless joy, so that when the arch angel's trump shall sound we may have part in the first resurrection, and rise in the likeness of Jesus to be forever with him—O! to mingle with that throng which no man can number—O! to unite in that ascription, "unto him that loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood and made us kings and priests unto God and his father, be glory and dominion forever and ever." Amen! and Amen!

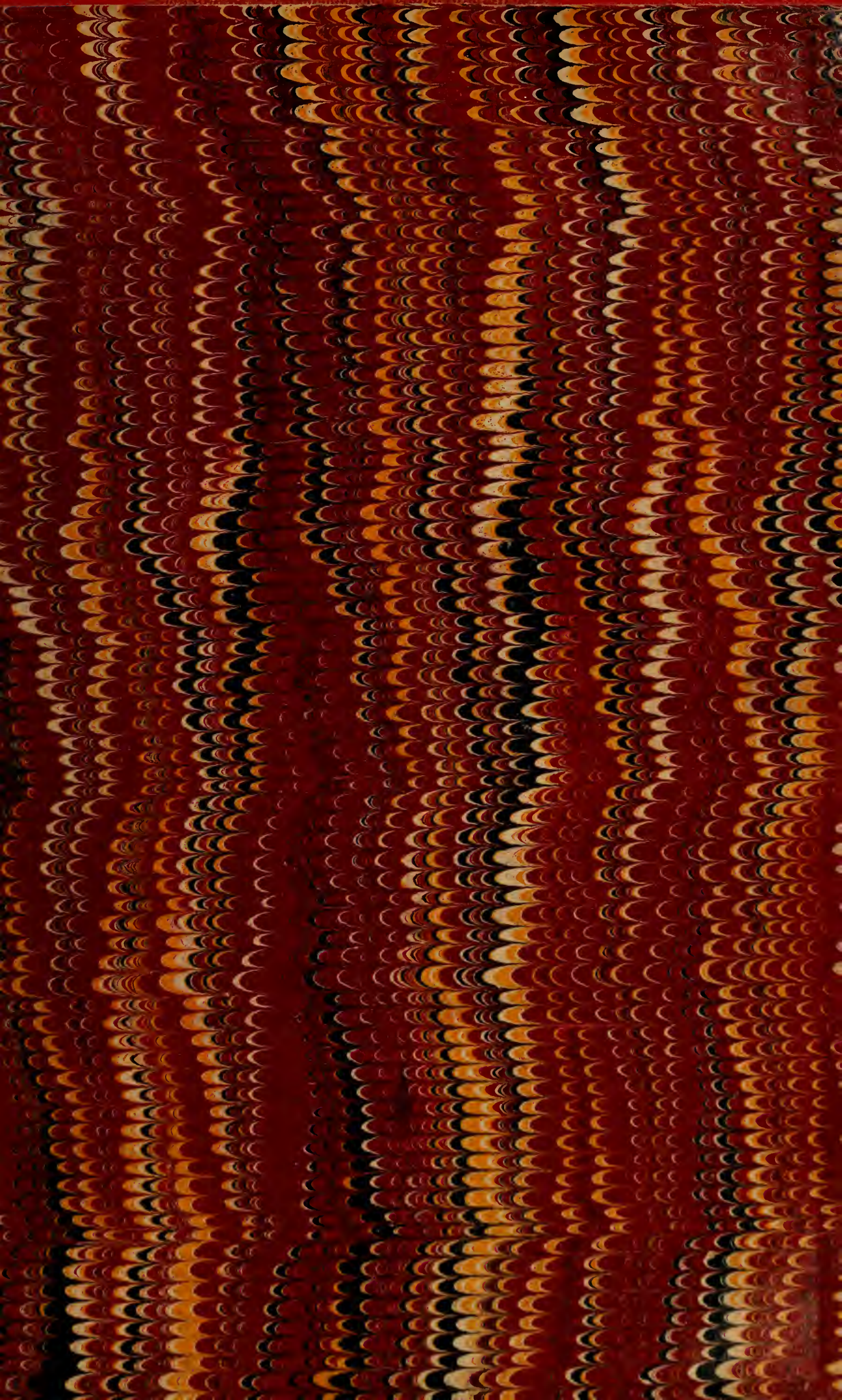




Deacidified using the Bookkeeper process.
Neutralizing agent: Magnesium Oxide
Treatment Date: August 2005

PreservationTechnologies
A WORLD LEADER IN PAPER PRESERVATION

111 Thomson Park Drive
Cranberry Township, PA 16066
(724) 779-2111



LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 014 654 789 8